

San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

San Bernardino terror attack victims' loved ones offer coping advice in wake of Orlando shooting

San Bernardino victims' loved ones offer coping advice, while one urges Americans not to demonize all Muslims

By Suzanne Hurt, The Press-Enterprise

Sunday, June 19, 2016



Last week's mass shooting is reopening wounds left by the San Bernardino terrorist attack, and the hearts of those still grieving now ache for the Orlando massacre's survivors and victims' friends and family.

Some people have just begun emerging from a numbness that's gripped them since Dec. 2, when masked terrorists shot 36 people at the Inland Regional Center. Fourteen people died.

Many who survived or lost someone that day are now experiencing flashbacks and more grief after a lone gunman shot and killed 49

people and wounded 53 at an Orlando gay nightclub June 12.

The family of San Bernardino County health inspector Damian Meins, who was killed at the center, took part in a Washington, D.C., press conference Thursday to press Congress to support gun law reforms that might prevent future mass shootings.

His wife, Trenna Meins of Riverside, and daughters Tina and Tawnya Meins were devastated by the new bloodshed, as were victim Daniel Kaufman's boyfriend and the wife of Nicholas Thalasinis.

"Our hearts are with Orlando," 33-year-old Long Beach resident Tina Meins said by phone Thursday.

Jennifer Thalasinis, who waited nine hours at San Bernardino's family reunification center Dec. 2 for word of her husband's fate, said she began crying when she saw the phone number for the Orlando attack's reunification center broadcast on TV that Sunday.

"I just lost it, 'cause I know what these people are going through," she said.

Rialto resident Ryan Reyes, who had dated Kaufman nearly three years, said he was extremely hurt by the Orlando shooting carried out by Omar Mateen, a 29-year-old Ft. Pierce, Fla., Muslim who vowed "Islamic state vengeance" for U.S. and Russian airstrikes in posts on Facebook.

But Reyes urged Americans not to demonize all Muslims in the wake of such attacks and potentially push more people toward radical Islam.

"If somebody kept saying, 'You're an evil, hateful person,' that gets internalized. 'OK, you think I'm a monster? I'll give you a monster,'" said Reyes, 33.

Orlando triggers flashbacks

Waiting for those killed to be identified by coroners and then to be notified is especially painful for family and friends, said Thalasinis and Tina Meins.

“When you’re waiting to find out, and you’re not getting information back, you pretty much know. But you still want to hear, ‘Yes, they’re gone.’ You still need that,” said Thalasinis, 41, of Colton.

She feared the worst had happened to her health inspector husband as soon as news of the Dec. 2 attack was reported.

“I knew he was gone from the minute I heard there was a shooting in San Bernardino,” she added. “I just had a feeling.”

Thalasinis, the Meins family and others began re-experiencing the grief and trauma of their loved ones’ killings as the number of people reported dead or wounded in the Orlando shooting climbed through the day.

“We’re reliving it all over again,” said Thalasinis, who stays in touch with other victims’ relatives and survivors.

A teacher, she didn’t finish the school year and instead took the past two weeks off because of the stress from the six-month anniversary on June 2. She stayed home for two days after the Orlando shooting.

Thwart radicalization

The nation has tried to understand what motivated Mateen’s rampage at a gay bar he’d hung out in and where he reportedly tried to hook up with other men.

Reyes said neither that nor Mateen’s use of gay dating apps confirms Mateen was gay. Mateen may have been scoping out targets and club security and trying to entice individuals to kill one by one, Reyes said.

“He could have been doing this for so many reasons,” Reyes added.

Reyes, who once dated a nonpracticing Muslim, questioned whether a Muslim’s struggle with his sexual identity and homosexuality would push him to massacre others in the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community at the club that night.

He acknowledged people often don’t get the support they need, but can get through a difficult transition by persevering.

“Coming out is no piece of cake,” he said. “It was a very long, hard road to get to where I am.”

Reyes believes Americans are failing to see how their own actions may contribute to some attacks reported to be inspired by radical Islam.

Immigrants come to the U.S. for the freedom they hear about, including religious freedom. Yet when they get here, some, including Muslims, may not feel they’re actually free to peacefully practice their religion, Reyes said.

The San Bernardino and Orlando terrorist attacks were both carried out by U.S. born Muslims in their late 20s who are believed to have become self-radicalized.

After attacks involving radical Islam, Reyes said he has seen people treat law-abiding Muslims like terrorists, hurting them and making them feel like they don’t belong. Islamic extremist group recruiters prey on marginalized Muslims, giving them acceptance and telling them they’ll be heroes, Reyes said.

Kaufman ran the IRC’s coffee shop and was the only Dec. 2 victim who didn’t work for San Bernardino County.

After losing Kaufman to an attack by Muslims, Reyes encourages the public to “embrace Muslims” as “brothers and sisters in humanity” and examine what’s happening here that draws some young Muslims to radicalism.

“The Muslim community is just as desperate to put an end to it as anyone else,” he said. “These people are giving their religion a bad name.”

Coping with attacks

The Meins family can’t understand why Mateen, who had been on a federal terrorist watch list, was able to buy guns and carry out the country’s 133rd mass shooting in 2016. Tina Meins said the family is pushing for gun law reform to fight for her dad and others hurt by gun violence.

Reyes and Thalasinis are encouraging the Florida attack’s survivors and victims’ loved ones to surround themselves with those they’re close to and not let anyone rush them through the grieving process.

Let relatives and friends know when you need to be alone to process things. Reyes advised people to find the right outlets for anger.

“Anger is one of those things in this type of situation,” he said. “You’re going to hit anger a lot — for so many reasons. Anger is normal, but do not let your anger turn to hate.”

Thalasinis advises survivors feeling survivor guilt to acknowledge it’s not their fault they survived and realize they couldn’t have saved others.

Meins wants Orlando victims’ friends and family to know they have her family’s love and support.

“We know how hard it is to accept, and how much harder it is to try to carry on with your life,” she said. “You’re always searching for meaning and just trying to understand.”

Thalasinis added, “The grieving process lasts pretty much forever.”

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/health/20160619/san-bernardino-terror-attack-victims-loved-ones-offer-coping-advice-in-wake-of-orlando-shooting>

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NATION

From San Ysidro to Sandy Hook: Surviving, but never getting over it



Tucson mass shooting survivor Patricia Maisch and her husband, John. (Gina Ferazzi / Los Angeles Times)

By **Joe Mozingo and Thomas Curwen**

JUNE 19, 2016, 3:00 AM

A

trigger is pulled, and a country is devastated. Again and again.

Mass shootings like Sunday's in Orlando are occurring with greater frequency and lethality, each changing the character of American life little by little.

Civil liberties are questioned, gun lobbies attacked and politicians assailed as the debate remains locked in a paralyzing draw.

By the numbers alone, more and more citizens are affected as either victims or survivors. The number of mass shooting incidents across the U.S. has more than doubled since the early 2000s, to more than 16 incidents every year, according to the FBI.

What does it mean to survive, to live with such loss, to become collateral damage in someone else's war?

It means a relentless reassessment of the odds, a lifetime spent calculating the difference one step to the left or the right, one minute earlier or later, might have made. It means living with memories that feel like nightmares and nightmares that take the place of dreams.

It means forever staring into the face of someone you never met, someone who wanted to kill you and never explained why. Was it something you did? Is it who you are?

Outrage blurs with grief, and grief blurs with frustration as the country seems to divide between those who want to curtail the instruments of violence and those who consider them instruments of freedom.

The faith that any single day will turn out as expected is forever upended. Every shooting is unique, but each survivor tells a story with a common thread. It is that, in the aftermath, nothing can ever be the same.

“

If we don't do anything, these things are going to keep happening. When is enough?

— Marcus Weaver

July 20, 2012: Aurora, Colo.

Trapped in the theater again, this time with his daughter and wife. The dark figure emerging from the rear exit at the right of the screen.

Shots explode like thunder, unbearably loud. The white muzzle flash glints on the shooter's helmet. Roller coaster screams swell in the smoky air. Bits of lead hiss all around him.

Marcus Weaver jolts awake.

He shuffles quietly out of the bedroom, not waking his wife, and turns on the television.

On the screen, he sees that 20 people have died in a gay nightclub in Orlando. His mind immediately races back to the theater in Colorado where James Holmes shot scores of people, killing 12 of them. The reaction is like an electrical circuit by now. He knows exactly what those clubgoers are going to endure, the surreal feeling of landing in a situation your brain is not programmed to comprehend.

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Weaver, 45, sees flashes of the friend he lost that day, Rebecca Wingo. They both grew up in abusive childhoods. He had only known her a month, but they immediately clicked. He kept telling her how great the new Batman movies were, and they decided to go to the midnight opening of “The Dark Knight Rises.”

At 12:30, Holmes, a 24-year-old graduate student with severe mental health problems, entered the theater in

full tactical gear, wielding a shotgun, an AR-15-style assault rifle and a .40-caliber handgun.

When the gunfire erupted, Weaver pushed Wingo down behind the seats and heard the soundtrack of people being slaughtered.

Then suddenly, the shooting stopped.

Weaver grabbed Wingo to flee, but she slumped lifelessly, and he got shoved away from her by other people scrambling to escape.

The shooting started again. Weaver bolted out the door.

In shock, he looked at a little girl who was pointing to his arm. Blood poured out of a hole in his right shoulder.

He hadn't even felt it.

In the hospital, he had to call Wingo's parents. He told them he didn't know whether she'd made it out. He called her ex-husband, the father of their two children. The man started crying. Weaver broke down, too.

Talking about it felt therapeutic, but the killing of 20 children at Sandy Hook Elementary School that December – first-graders – drove him into a deeper depression.

He quit working for five months, holed up in his townhouse, and sat on his couch watching television with his dog.

He was married by then, but never spoke to his wife, Megan, about what had happened, especially his guilt over Wingo.

When Holmes' trial approached, Weaver finally decided to see a therapist, and he has since taken a job as director of a homeless center. He and Megan have a baby girl.

But the pain and fear still erupt. He doesn't go to theaters. He goes numb when new mass shootings occur, and is furious that anyone can seem to buy assault rifles meant for the military.

“If we don't do anything, these things are going to keep happening. When is enough? When should have been enough at Columbine. When should have been enough at Sandy Hook – especially Sandy Hook.”

“

The pain is more consistent, more pronounced, more heavy at all times. And with every subsequent mass shooting, it gets worse.

— Nelba Marquez-Greene

Dec. 14, 2012: Newtown, Conn.

Through long days of unbearable bereavement, Nelba Mrquez-Greene has fleeting moments of respite every morning.

In the half-minute or so between sleep and full wakefulness, it feels like her family is safe and intact, her daughter, Ana Grace, still alive, sleeping in the next room. Then the day begins and the girl slips away.

It has been 3 1/2 years since a disturbed and profoundly isolated young man shot 20 first-grade children and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School. But for Mrquez-Greene, the grief is as sharp as ever.

“The shock wears off, so it’s kind of like you’ve gone into surgery, you’ve had the pain meds for a while, and now they say they’re not going to give you any more so you have to deal with the pain,” she says. “The pain is more consistent, more pronounced, more heavy at all times. And with every subsequent mass shooting, it gets worse.”

Mrquez-Greene, 41, who has spent her career counseling mentally ill and troubled young people, knew her family needed to get through their ordeal by not falling into isolation. She and her husband, Jimmy, needed to keep their marriage together. They needed to be present for their 8-year-old son, Isaiah. They needed to keep friendships alive.

Yet grief swept over them setting the family table for three instead of four, watching their son play alone, during countless other small, intimate moments.

Their biggest concern has been Isaiah. He stopped smiling after the shooting. He was already a shy boy, and they worried he would retreat into isolation.

One night, a representative of the Los Angeles Kings called. They had heard Isaiah was a big hockey fan and invited the family to Los Angeles to watch a game and help raise the Stanley Cup banner.

They flew out a month after the shooting and helped carry the banner out onto the ice. Isaiah glanced up at the Jumbotron and saw himself. And like any 8-year-old boy, his first instinct was to stick his tongue out.

That night, the three huddled in bed, thinking about Ana, when the entire Kings team came to their room, with the Stanley Cup.

“As a mom, when you don’t see your kid smile for three weeks, and your kid finally gets a smile on his face – we will be forever grateful,” Mrquez-Greene says.

In Newtown, Mrquez-Greene has started directing her energy into starting a nonprofit foundation, the Ana Grace Project, to bring awareness to schools and mental health professionals about the intersection of trauma, isolation and violence.

Today, her son is a straight-A student. He just became second runner-up in the town spelling bee. He has close

friends. He's a goalie at the local hockey club.

Jimmy, a jazz musician, is back to work, and was nominated for a Grammy for his most recent album, a tribute to his daughter.

"You probably wouldn't know unless we told you that we lost a child to gun violence. We look like every other normal American family," Mrquez-Greene says.

"But there is no time her loss isn't present."

“

I see what they're going through, And I think, oh, God, I know what's ahead for them.

— Wendy Flanagan

July 18, 1984: San Ysidro

Wendy Flanagan was working the cash register at McDonald's. The 17-year-old honors student had just made the varsity cheer squad and gotten her first summer job.

James Huberty lived a block away. He recently had lost his job and spent the morning at the San Diego Zoo with his wife and two daughters. When they returned home, he told them he was heading back out – “going hunting for humans,” he said.

At 3:56 p.m., Huberty walked into the McDonald's. Flanagan was bringing ice from the kitchen to the counter when the first shots rang out. Her manager fell to the ground.

Flanagan ran down a flight of stairs into the basement and crammed into a janitor's closet with five others. For the next hour and 20 minutes, they listened to the massacre above. More than 240 shots were fired. Huberty hunted people down in the parking lot and under tables. He shot babies and grandparents, husbands and wives.

Finally, a police sniper from a nearby roof got a bead on him, and put a bullet through the killer's aorta and spine, killing him instantly.

When police led Flanagan and others out of the restaurant, they told them to hold the shoulder of the person in front of them, and not look down. Flanagan couldn't help herself. What she saw seared its way into the limbic depths of her brain.

She tried to act like she was OK. Her parents tried to act like all was well. She was their smart, happy little girl.

She changed schools because she didn't want anyone asking her about it, and did just enough work to

graduate.

While many other victims of the San Ysidro shooting would move on in their lives, she would never recover.

“I’m a very emotional person as it is, and to put me in a situation like that so young set the course for how disastrous the rest of my life was going to be,” she said.

She is 49 now. She’s been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, which she believes was triggered by the trauma. She takes medication for anxiety. She has lived with her mother most of her life; never got a job, never got married or had children.

She took a few community college courses, but didn’t get a degree. She used drugs – still does, mostly marijuana – to “self-medicate.” She has made a suicide attempt and is sticking with a boyfriend who’s in prison for stealing cars.

She does not have flashbacks and is not even sure if the memory she has of her manager being shot is real or was conjured in therapy.

She was homeless for a while, but now is renting a bedroom in an apartment in San Diego. She gets most of her joy from her tea-cup Chihuahuas.

She can’t watch the television about Orlando. And since it happened, she’s stayed off Facebook.

“I see what they’re going through, And I think, oh, God, I know what’s ahead for them. It’s not good. I wish I could give hope for victims for this or future tragedies. I can’t. I’d like to say it gets better. But it doesn’t. It never goes away.”

“

I see this as an extension of the civil rights movement. What is more of a civil right than being able to breathe?

— Patricia Maisch

Jan. 8, 2011: Tucson

Patricia Maisch is no friend to reluctant politicians.

When the Senate defeated a 2013 bill requiring background checks on the commercial sales of guns, she stood in the gallery and shouted to the senators below: “Shame on you.”

For her outburst, security took her away for two hours of questioning. It was, she realized, the background check that many gun purchasers never experience.

But Maisch, 67, is undaunted, and this is the legacy of having survived that crisp winter day in Tucson – white clouds were sailing across a blue sky when Jared Loughner fired 33 bullets into an informal political gathering organized by U.S. Rep. [Gabrielle Giffords](#) at a shopping center.

Maisch dove for cover, and everything changed.

“When Columbine happened, I said, ‘That’s horrible.’ When Virginia Tech happened, I asked, ‘Why isn’t anyone doing anything?’ It took six dead bodies and 13 bleeding and wounded people to make me realize that that someone had to be me.”

Maisch has always considered herself the lucky one. She was not hit, and she didn’t lose a loved one. Because she’d arrived early, she had dashed into a Safeway, and when she went back outside she found herself standing in the back at Giffords’ gathering.

It was a twist of fate, she believes, that saved her life. Yet she was not saved from the memory.

“It is always behind me, beside me or in my face,” she said.

Maisch lives with her husband in a Tucson suburb. She rises early to water her plants before the rattlesnakes come out. Last week, when a news report came on the radio about the shooting in Orlando, her first words – not polite, she admits – were directed to the NRA.

She had often wondered when the death toll from the 2007 assault at Virginia Tech – 33, including the shooter – would be surpassed. She now had her answer.

She sent a text to a friend whose daughter was wounded in the Virginia Tech attack. Once again the women found themselves united in a confederacy neither had wanted.

They belong to a community of survivors. Maisch can count some 100 friends whose stories she repeats without prompting, and perhaps other mass shooting survivors whose names she knows so well.

She knows that she is different from other survivors. Some isolate themselves. Some drink. Some get angrier more than they used to.

In the wake of Orlando, Maisch is encouraged by the upswell of support for the victims. Yet she remembers that feeling after Sandy Hook, too.

“It’s going to be a marathon, not a sprint,” she says. “I see this as an extension of the civil rights movement. What is more of a civil right than being able to breathe?”

“

I don’t know what life I would have led if this

hadn't happened to me.

— Joshua Stepakoff

Aug. 10, 1999: Granada Hills

The scars are inescapable — four of them, from two bullets — and for years, Joshua Stepakoff wanted to cover them up.

The exit wound on the back of his leg looks like a flower, he says, a concave circle with ridges that extend from the center to the perimeter.

When he was younger, he didn't like wearing shorts. People would ask him questions that always took him to the same place: the North Valley Jewish Community Center in Granada Hills.

Stepakoff was 6 when Buford Furrow Jr. stormed the summer camp there with a 9-millimeter semiautomatic, wounding two adults and three children. No one was killed at the center. Furrow's murder victim came later in the day: Joseph Iletto, a mail carrier on his rounds.

Stepakoff's memories of the day are gauzy: a game of capture the flag, then running in terror.

Nearly 17 years have done little to ease the pain, and when he first heard the news from Orlando, he felt his heart race. This was not what he expected on the first day of a family vacation in Costa Rica.

On Facebook and CNN, he watched the lines of people donating blood. He listened to interviews with survivors. He wanted to know more, but he also wanted to tell them to stop.

"You can't let the craziness that surrounds all of this get in the way of grieving or being human," he said.

Stepakoff, 23, will start a graduate program in clinical psychology at Pepperdine University in the fall. He hopes to work with children who have had a traumatic event or injury in their lives.

When people ask him how the shooting affected him, he shakes his head.

"I don't know what life I would have led if this hadn't happened to me," he says.

The part of his life he left behind that day he carries on a keychain. It's a small Snoopy doll, a touchstone to his childhood love for the cartoon "Peanuts." It is, he says, a memento of the time before he "stared down the barrel of a gun, face to face with a neo-Nazi."

At first he thought he would be OK. He just wanted to be normal.

He saw a therapist for panic attacks, but more than anything, he wanted to be "a cool teenager," he said, and for a time it seemed possible. He wore long pants, and no one asked him questions.

But nearly 10 years after the shooting, he realized that he would never be normal. Taking out the trash one evening, he was overcome with the feeling that he was going to be attacked. He knew then that he needed to start talking about what had happened that day so long ago.

“The only control I can have,” he says, “is the understanding that I have no control.”

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ALSO

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[For the builder of Orlando's 49 memorial crosses, his craft from the heart is a familiar one](#)

[Nearly a week later, a shooting survivor's mind races with memories of her 'hero' cousin](#)

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San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

San Bernardino County Sheriff heading to Israel for counter-terrorism seminar

By Joe Nelson, The Sun

Friday, June 17, 2016



San Bernardino County Sheriff John McMahon will be traveling to Tel Aviv, Israel to attend the Anti Defamation League's annual National Counter-Terrorism Seminar from July 30 through Aug. 7.

The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday approved McMahon's \$2,000 travel expense.

McMahon said in a telephone interview he has not been asked to speak at the weeklong conference about the [Dec. 2 terrorist attack](#) in San Bernardino but would not object if asked.

It was also unclear if law enforcement officials in Orange County, Florida would be attending the seminar. On Sunday, the deadliest terrorist attack on U.S. soil since 9/11 and deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history occurred there. Before he killed 49 people at Pulse nightclub, the shooter, Omar Marteen — like [San Bernardino shooter Tashfeen Malik](#) — pledged his allegiance to ISIS.

Since 2004, law enforcement executives from across the country and members of the ADL have traveled to Israel to learn about its tactics and strategies in combating terrorism, [according to the ADL website](#).

"The citizens of Israel have been dealing with terrorist activity and how to respond to it for years," McMahon said. "I have a couple of friends who are sheriffs who went two years ago and felt it was very beneficial to see how they secure their borders, deal with the terrorist threat, and how they get in front of the media right away," McMahon said.

The seminar is an intensive weeklong course led by senior commanders in the Israel National Police, experts from Israel's intelligence and security services, and the Israel Defense Forces. More than 175 law enforcement executives have participated in the event since it began.

"My hope is that the things I learn over there, I can share with our peers back in our county on how to deal with tragic events should another one occur," said McMahon.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/government-and-politics/20160617/san-bernardino-county-sheriff-heading-to-israel-for-counter-terrorism-seminar>

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San Bernardino emergency responders share lessons learned from 2015 mass shooting



By Shayne Dwyer/WDBJ7 | Posted: Thu 7:15 PM, Jun 16, 2016

ROANOKE CO., Va. (WDBJ7) The Orlando Mass Shooting is just the latest major attack to rock our country. But from each tragedy, lessons emerge to help better prepare first responders.

Thursday, healthcare and law enforcement leaders met to discuss security in times of chaos. The timing of the summit was purely coincidental - organizers had no idea the summit would fall so close to another attack.

Thursday's keynote speakers had an intimate knowledge of the topic. They were the first to respond in San Bernardina and now they're sharing their knowledge with others.

The December 2015 mass shooting captured the world's attention and made for harrowing moments on the ground. The shooting left 14 people dead and 21 injured. Hundreds of first responders descended on the scene and immediately, one big lesson emerged for an attack many considered unlikely.

"San Bernardino was not a well-known community on a national scale prior to December 2nd," San Bernardino Lieutenant David Green said. "You recognize that something like this can happen in any community, and you think ahead to how you would respond as an agency or a community."

The Near Southwest Preparedness Alliance brings law enforcement, healthcare, and emergency response teams



Trevor Fair/WDBJ7

together to do that thinking.

"Emergency management, the entire industry kind of learns and evolves based on lessons learned from after-action reports after an event happens," Near Southwest Preparedness Alliance Executive Director Craig Camidge said. "We try to learn from one event and move onto the next one hopefully with a few more tricks up our sleeves."

Thursday's session focused on security in times of distress, across all areas including cyber, physical, and information security. Representatives from San Bernardino walked through all angles of their response and shared inside information and techniques along with what worked and what didn't.

We've seen major incidents in Southwest Virginia over the last ten years, and Carilion Clinic has played a big role. Carilion's police chief attended the summit and said many of the practices already in place were validated by the presenters. ⓧ

Camidge said hospitals have become targets in both times of crisis and in normal times. During the attack on San Bernardino, a bomb threat was called into one of the local hospitals, but police later cleared the building.

"We're going to have the victims of these horrendous crimes sent to us and so our facility has to be ready to handle them medically but also handle all the security," Carilion Clinic Police Chief Steve Lugar said.

Events like Orlando and San Bernardino bring out the unpredictable actions and events. Green told the group about when the initial police wave made its way into the building where the shooting happened, many victims were reluctant to follow officer's commands and unresponsive because the attackers wore similar style clothing to what the police were wearing. Victims later said they couldn't tell who was who.

Training like Thursday's summit reinforces the important of communication and planning and helps make chaos manageable.

"I always think that training and discussing and thinking ahead about these types of events is going to make all of us more prepared," Green said. "We learned many lessons and we will learn more probably as the time goes on, but I think the idea of being prepared and recognizing that something like this can happen in any community (is the

largest lesson)."



By From Staff Reports

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June 16, 2016 5:17PM

Proposed Lake Havasu boating restrictions withdrawn

Proposed federal regulations that would have restricted boating and other recreational activities on Lake Havasu have been withdrawn.

Dr. Benjamin Tuggle, Southwest Regional Director for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, announced his decision Thursday.

Suggested boating restrictions for the waterway 25 miles north of London Bridge included imposing a "no-wake" zone in any waters under the refuge's jurisdiction. It included a 17-mile stretch heavily used for recreating. It would have limited boat speeds to about 5 mph in order to protect the environment and the safety of non-motor boaters facing possible capsizing due to waves created by bigger watercraft.

On Wednesday, the House Appropriations Committee passed an amendment to the Interior and Environment Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2017, which included language condemning the actions taken by the Service when proposing new boating restrictions for Lake Havasu.

"I have decided to withdraw the current draft CD at this time to allow for further discussions with the community and other stakeholders," Tuggle said.

Rep. Paul Cook and San Bernardino County 1st District Supervisor Robert A. Lovingood hailed the decision.

"While the recent announcement by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to withdraw the proposed recreational restrictions on Lake Havasu is promising, it doesn't mean this issue is over," said Cook, R-Apple Valley. "We must remain vigilant and continue to make sure federal regulators hear our objections to limiting public land use."

Nearly 3 million visitors vacation at Lake Havasu each year, spending more than \$200 million and supporting nearly 4,000 full-time equivalent jobs, according to information provided by Lovingood's office.

"The proposed federal regulations were a classic example of excessive governmental over-reach that would have ended wonderful recreational activities and closed businesses," Lovingood said. "We need to bring common sense to regulatory agencies. We need to always remember government exists to serve people and that that public has a right to use its public lands — and waterways."

In May, Lovingood and 3rd District Supervisor James Ramos sent a letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service stating the proposed restrictions were likely to have a devastating impact on the amount of visitors to San Bernardino County's Park Moabi on the California side of the river.

Lovingood also said a typical holiday weekend draws nearly 50,000 boaters to the area. Some 75 percent of tourists are interested in water skiing, wakeboarding or boating while visiting Havasu. More than 1,000 people turned out to public hearings on the proposed federal regulations.

<http://www.desertdispatch.com/article/20160616/NEWS/160619927>

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San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

San Bernardino man has been foster father to 138 kids

San Bernardino man has cared for 138 — all boys — since 2011

By Michel Nolan, *The Sun*

Saturday, June 18, 2016



Dads come in a variety of colors, shapes, sizes and places of national origin.

There are fathers who will help you with homework, shoot some hoops with you, teach you to drive.

Then there are the dads you can talk to, the ones who calm your fears.

These are fathers of the heart.

Gustavo Garcia is such a man.

Nurturing, patient and structured, the 54-year-old San Bernardino man is foster father to four boys, ages 9, 12, 15, and 19.

Patience would be essential here.

He may not be the biological dad, but he provides a structured, loving environment for these teenage kids who have been difficult to place in other homes.

“This is a second home to me,” said Gustavo’s 15-year-old foster son. “I didn’t know I would be so comfortable here.”

Gustavo remembers when his biological son was growing up, he would say, “Hey, Dad, why don’t I have any brothers like other kids? Now he has them.”

So Gustavo decided to go into foster care. The kids would come to the door nervous, but would change a lot after a few days, he remembers.

“Sometimes, kids would come for a week or a few days, and they would be crying and sad, but would leave very happy. I think they were comfortable here.”

He helps them with their homework but admits that sometimes he has to coax them to do it.

Gustavo spends time with them playing soccer at the park, playing basketball and even riding horses owned by friends who have a ranch.

Like most kids, they enjoy playing video games and watching sports on TV.

Gustavo makes sure they have chores — washing their own laundry, cleaning their rooms, taking out the trash, sometimes even cooking their own food under supervision.

Gustavo cooks breakfast for the boys, while his wife, Marina, fixes dinner, even though he’s been known to put

on a pot of red beans early in the day for the evening meal.

The boys also enjoy the two family dogs — Rocky the poodle and Lucas the Chihuahua.

Since 2011, Gustavo has been a foster parent to 138 kids — all boys. Some of them for only a couple of days, while waiting for court orders.

He and Marina, who have a comfortable home, are parents of one biological son, Gustavo II, 20, who no longer lives at home.

Because of the range in the boys' ages, Gustavo says he needs to use different ways of talking with them.

He speaks English, but his dominant language is Spanish.

"I learned to speak English from my boys," he said.

There is no language barrier when it's time to go to the boys' schools to interact with teachers.

"Mr. Garcia is a team player when he needs to accompany the boys to parent/teacher conferences, meetings with the school counselor and/or the principal," said Robert Quintana, supervisor at Futuro Infantil Hispano in Ontario, the foster family agency that works with the boys.

"Foster parents teach children how to live in a family, teaching them values, culture, family systems," said Quintana, who's been in social work for 30 years.

About 233 children are with the Futura Infantil agency now, making it one of the largest foster family agencies in the area.

With offices in Ontario and West Covina, the agency covers Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

Children ages 0 to 17 are placed in certificated homes, according to court orders. Ninety families are participating as foster homes.

More families are needed, however.

"Sometimes, the opportunity as a foster child is a positive thing, especially when the foster parent is instilling values," Quintana added.

Futura Infantil Hispano accepts foster parents of all ethnicities, speaking all languages, especially English and Spanish.

Licensed clinical social workers offer support.

Nicole Ford, a social work supervisor, meets on a weekly basis with foster parents and children.

"There's a standard as far as core and basic needs of children being met," Ford said. "Physical needs should all be met."

Often, children go back and forth between parents or family members' homes and the foster parents' house.

The court encourages visitation between children and birth parents because the ultimate plan is to reunite the children with the birth parents, according to Ford.

For more information on the foster parent program, call Cesar Gomez, senior social worker supervisor in the West Covina office, 626-339-1824; or Robert Quintana in Ontario, at 909-460-1138.

“I would say Mr. Garcia is one of our best foster parents,” Quintana said.

There’s a sense of gratification in caring for these kids, Gustavo reveals.

He figures he must be doing something right. The ones who’ve left continue to call him and want to come hang out.

“It feels good to know I’m making a positive impact in their lives,” Gustavo smiles.

Quintana said, “It’s hard to make it not seem like a revolving door,” but Gustavo does it.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/social-affairs/20160618/san-bernardino-man-has-been-foster-father-to-138-kids>

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San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

San Bernardino headed toward unexpected budget surplus

By Ryan Hagen, The Sun

Sunday, June 19, 2016



SAN BERNARDINO >> The bankrupt city spent less money and brought in more than it had expected in the fiscal year that ends June 30, according to budget documents the City Council will review Monday.

The council will be asked to move another \$2 million into the fund that pays for bankruptcy-related services, but that will be more than covered by the unexpectedly large surplus in the tight budget.

The City Council will also receive a proposed budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1 on Monday, with staff recommending discussion on the 2016-17 budget be continued to June 27.

The 2015-16 budget was [passed this time last year](#) with an anticipated surplus of only \$18,608 — a surplus that depends on bankruptcy protections against creditors taking all of what they would otherwise be owed — but that's projected to improve to \$12 million when the year ends in two weeks.

“On the expenditure side of the ledger, City departments have continued material budgetary savings, primarily associated with large numbers of vacancies,” according to a memo from Veronica Martinez, who works in the city's Finance Department.

And the city's revenues are projected to be \$9.5 million more than the city budgeted for last year.

“Without a completed fiscal year 2015 audit, a firm opening number for fund balance/reserves is not available,” the memo cautions.

The revenue boost includes a few one-time moves, including a franchise fee of \$5 million for the [sale of the city's Integrated Waste Management](#) operation to Burrtec.

In addition, sales tax revenue is \$3.2 million more than projected, utility users' tax is \$600,000 more than projected, and the transient occupancy tax was \$1.2 million more than projected, according to the unaudited numbers.

The transient occupancy tax revenue is 46 percent higher than projected, and 20 percent higher than the 2014-15 year, reflecting increased occupancy at nearly all hotels and motels, according to the memo.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/government-and-politics/20160619/san-bernardino-headed-toward-unexpected-budget-surplus>

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The Pasadena Star-News (<http://www.pasadenastarnews.com>)

New jobs report shows continued trend of manufacturing jobs leaving LA for Inland Empire

By Kevin Smith, San Gabriel Valley Tribune

Friday, June 17, 2016



California employers pulled back on their hiring in May with just 15,000 jobs added, but the state's unemployment rate dipped to 5.2 percent.

Last month's employment boost was especially weak in light of the 70,000 jobs that were added in April. But the Golden State still led the nation in year-over-year job growth for May, with 440,300 jobs added at an annual rate of 2.8 percent, according to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#). Florida ranked second with 253,000 jobs, followed by Texas (171,000), Georgia (124,600) and Washington (100,800).

California's jobless rate of 5.2 percent for May was down from 5.3 percent the previous month and 6.4 percent a year earlier, the state [Employment Development Department](#) reported Friday.

Chris Thornberg, a founding partner with [Beacon Economics](#), cautioned against placing too much emphasis on one month's results.

"The surveys are all over the place," he said. "We've added an average of about 33,000 jobs a month over the past three months. That's a bit of a slowdown, but as far as slowdowns go it's not a big deal."

More locally, Los Angeles County added 4,900 jobs in May — about a third of the jobs that were added in April — and 101,000 over the year. The county's unemployment rate ticked down to 4.9 percent, landing barely above the nation's jobless rate of 4.7 percent.

Leisure and hospitality provided the biggest employment gain for May, with 8,300 jobs added. Government added another 2,800 jobs and additional gains were seen in construction (2,100 jobs added), transportation and utilities (1,000), financial activities (900) and educational and health services (200).

Those increases were offset by steep job losses in information (8,000), professional and business services (1,800) and manufacturing (1,300).

Year over year, the county's biggest gains were in educational and health services and leisure and hospitality, with more increases seen in professional and business services, government and construction, among others.

The county's manufacturing sector — which has struggled in the face of outsourcing, downsizing and increased automation — shed 7,600 jobs.

The Inland Empire added 4,000 jobs in May, about a thousand more than the previous month, and the two-county region's unemployment rate dropped to 5.3 percent compared with 5.6 percent in April and 6.4 percent a year earlier.

Educational and health services posted the biggest monthly gain of 2,400 jobs. Construction added 900; trade, transportation and utilities added 800; government grew by 500 jobs and manufacturing boosted its payrolls with 400 new jobs.

Thornberg said it makes sense the Inland Empire would add manufacturing jobs while L.A. County is shedding them.

“That’s a lot cheaper place to do work,” he said. “Many manufacturing companies are thinking about moving out there and there’s a resurgence going on for industries that do things like fabricated metals and aerospace components.”

On the flip side, L.A. County will lose more manufacturing jobs next year.

[TreeHouse Foods Inc.](#), which acquired [ConAgra](#)’s private-brands business in February, plans to close a manufacturing plant in Azusa that will result in about 660 layoffs. Full closure of the facility is expected to be completed during the second quarter of 2017.

The Inland Empire added 43,600 jobs over the year at an annual growth rate of 3.3 percent.

Trade, transportation and utilities led the growth with a year-over-year gain of 13,900 jobs. Seven other industries also boosted their payrolls, including educational and health services (9,200) and government (8,000).

Mining and logging were the only two industries to post declines, with a combined loss of 300 jobs, the EDD reported.

Companies have begun hiring again

One thing is certain. A growing number of companies that have long held back on hiring are finally boosting their payrolls.

Don Lindgren, a career development and employment specialist with the [Los Angeles County Office of Education](#), helped coordinate a job fair that was held Friday in El Monte.

“We had about 2,500 people show up and there were 54 employers,” he said. “One company I know of hired eight people and another one hired six. And 25 people are set for an orientation with another company on Monday.”

Editor’s Note: This story has been updated to correct the nation’s jobless rate from 4.9 to 4.7.

URL: <http://www.pasadenastarnews.com/business/20160617/new-jobs-report-shows-continued-trend-of-manufacturing-jobs-leaving-la-for-inland-empire>

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TRAFFIC ALERTS: State, County And Utility Roadwork

in [News](#), [Ticker](#) / by [Michael P. Neufeld](#) / on June 19, 2016 at 12:05 am /



Road work will impact traffic at various mountain locations this coming week as Caltrans, the San Bernardino County Department of Public Works and Bear Valley Electric have scheduled projects. (Contributed Photo)

By Michael P. Neufeld

Mountain Communities – Caltrans, the San Bernardino County Department of Public Works and Bear Valley Electric Service have scheduled road work at various mountain locations during the coming week.

Motorists are advised to slow down in the work zones and to expect possible delays.

BIG BEAR LAKE – Drainage Cleaning On Highway 18

Drain cleaning operations will be conducted by Caltrans this coming week on Highway 18 in the Big Bear Lake area. (File Photo by ROTWNEWS.com)

Caltrans maintenance crews will be conducting drainage cleaning operations on Highway 18 in the Big Bear Lake area from the junction of Highway 38 (North Shore Drive) and Talbot Drive on Monday and Tuesday (June 20-21).

The work will result in one-way closures impacting both northbound and southbound traffic.

Crews will be working from 8:01 a.m. to 3:01 p.m., both days, according to a press release issued by Caltrans District 8.

In addition, drainage cleaning operations between Talbot Avenue and Iris Drive in Big Bear have been scheduled between 8:01 a.m. and 3:01 p.m. on Thursday, June 23.

LAKE ARROWHEAD – County Public Works Road Surface Project

The surface seal project on Lake Arrowhead/Blue Jay streets will be similar to the project just completed on Lake Drive in Crestline. (Contributed Photo)

San Bernardino County's Department of Public Works will begin a number of surface seal projects in the Lake Arrowhead/Blue Jay area starting Monday, June 20.

Homeowners and businesses have been notified but motorists will find work being done on several streets at once.

The work — scheduled through August 20 — will cause delays of five (5) to 15 minutes.

Flaggers will be positioned on each street to guide motorists access to homes and businesses and in some cases there will be a pilot car due to the fact the project is a moving operation.

For a complete list of streets scheduled for the surface and seal project visit [PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS](#) online.

For further information, contact the Department of Public Works Operations Division at (909) 387-8063.

BIG BEAR – Bear Valley Electric Undergrounding Project

BVES crews will be working on Big Bear Boulevard at scheduled locations as part of the ongoing underground project. (File Photo)

Bear Valley Electric Service's (BVES) underground project will cause lane closures starting Monday, June 20 in the Fox Farm area. BVES has scheduled work between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. according to a media release issued by BVES.

Weekdays (June 20-30) the project will impact traffic on Big Bear Boulevard from Interlaken Shopping Center to Conklin Road with one lane closed and shoulder work,

The center lane will be closed from Thrush Drive to Fox Farm.

From Monday, June 20 to Wednesday, June 22, the right lane between Summit Boulevard and Thrush Drive westbound will be impacted.

BVES explains that the project will improve safety, reliability and aesthetics along Big Bear's main tourist thoroughfares because underground power lines last longer and are more immune to damage from weather, car crashes and animals.

(149)

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San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

San Bernardino Mountains offer relief for some from record-breaking heat

The mountains offer some respite from record-breaking temperatures

By John M. Blodgett, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

Sunday, June 19, 2016



BIG BEAR LAKE >> Business was brisk Sunday at the North Pole.

People ordered cones and shakes inside the Big Bear Lake ice cream parlor, kept refrigerator-cool by a busy air conditioner. Sometimes the line went out the door onto the sidewalk.

The temperature, 83 degrees at noon, wasn't brisk.

Except when you consider the alternative, which is what many people did when choosing to visit the lakeside city in the San Bernardino Mountains on a record-breaking hot day when Inland temperatures

climbed to 100 degrees and kept going.

“When you're down the hill, the kids can't go out in the heat, and they get cabin fever,” said Corona resident Roxanne Laird, adding that it was 104 degrees when she started the drive up with her husband William and children Wyatt, 5 and Aubree, 2. “It's not good for any of us.”

High-temperature records fell across Southern California setting records in Riverside, Thermal, Palm Springs, Indio, Idyllwild, Santa Ana, Ramona, Escondido, Chula Vista, Alpine, El Cajon, Palomar Mountain, Campo, Borrego, Burbank, Sandberg and Woodland Hills.

On Sunday, weather and health experts issued stern warnings for people to stay cool or face illness.

In the Inland valleys, the excessive heat warning lasts through Tuesday, but by then, some clouds should return and temperatures will start to fall. Tuesday's highs should be 96-101, while winds could gust to 30 mph in the afternoon. The rest of the week, expect highs in the mid-90s.

Riverside and San Bernardino counties have more than 100 cooling centers for those without access to adequate air conditioning, or whose power goes out.

Expected triple-digit temperatures Monday and power outages due to Sunday's heat prompted state regulators to issue a flex alert to cope with an increased electricity demand.

The alert – which will be in effect from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday – asks the public to turn off unneeded lights, set air conditioning to 78 degrees or higher and not use major appliances until 9 p.m. It also asks them to limit the opening and closing of refrigerator doors and shift power-intensive processes by businesses to the early morning or late evening hours.

By 5 p.m. Sunday, excessive heat had led to several Inland outages, Southern California Edison spokeswoman Maureen Brown said. Power went out for 244 people at 3:33 p.m. in the Sycamore Springs community of Riverside County, Edison's outage map showed. More than 1,000 people were without power near Ganesha Park in Pomona about 5 p.m.

In the mountains, the Lairds were among many who stood lakeside just west of Pine Knot Landing, watching mallards float and spin while facing an evergreen-scented breeze coming off the water. Those breezes channeled down Pine Knot Avenue, where they tickled petunias, riffled skirts and swayed trees that shaded people eating ice cream.

Maria Negrete, a North Pole manager, said the shop is accustomed to busy summer days and stocks up accordingly.

“Even then,” she said, “sometimes it’s hectic.”

Next door at Saucy Mama’s Pizzeria, shortly before noon the wait for a patio dining table was already 45 minutes. Yet the pace on the street, which caters to shoppers as well as diners, was relaxed, the calm broken occasionally by rumbling processions of touring Harley Davidson motorcycles.

On the other side of Big Bear Lake, outside the Big Bear Discovery Center, Anna Lira of Ontario sat and picnicked with her daughter Karen Ascencio and her daughter’s eager 4-month-old Chihuahua-Shih Tzu mix, Princess.

The Big Bear Lake area is “a perfect place to bring your animals” on a hot day, Lira said.

Had they stayed home, they would have been confined indoors with the bouncy dog, she said.

“We thought about going to the beach, but we thought she could run around up here.”

The lake itself is a popular destination. Even with water levels receding due to drought conditions, motorboats made wakes and families set up base camps on sand beaches so children could swim close to shore. A parasailer soared above, sharing airspace with a fishing osprey.

At the visitor center, staffer Kim Ferguson said it’s always busy in summer. But she said she noticed many day-trippers Sunday, particularly from Palm Springs, where the temperatures hit 117 by 3 p.m.

She often points refugees from the heat to the Snow Summit Sky Chair.

“It’s a lot cooler at the top,” she said, and the lake views are beautiful.

As the afternoon progressed, Jae Murvine wasn’t looking forward to returning to Redlands and the work week. His future mother-in-law rented him and his fiance Kathleen Stark a cabin for the weekend so the expecting couple could escape the heat and take maternity photographs.

“I’ll be remembering this breeze for sure,” he said, standing lakeside beneath gathering clouds.

Staff writer Jeff Horseman contributed to this report.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20160619/san-bernardino-mountains-offer-relief-for-some-from-record-breaking-heat>

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TRAVEL

Weekend Escape Chill out at Big Bear Lake



By **Rosemary McClure**

JUNE 20, 2016, 7:45 AM

Those of us whose air-conditioning goes on strike every summer are always looking for a place to chill (in my case, with my dog).

Big Bear Lake, a (usually) snow-fed reservoir surrounded by the [San Bernardino National Forest](#), offers trails to hike, a dog-friendly boat tour and, if you're lucky, temperatures so cool you may be forced to wear a jacket at night.

The bed

I wanted to stay near the [Big Bear Alpine Zoo](#) in Moonridge, so I tried a nicely landscaped lodge in the area, the [Best Western Big Bear Chateau](#), where beds of flowers brightened the grounds and the words “free breakfast” beckoned.

It wasn't hard to find a dog-friendly place to eat, including [Grizzly's Bear Belly Deli & Cafe](#), about a block from the Best Western.

The meal

My favorite meal? At [Evergreen Restaurant](#), which overlooks the lake.

The find

And the lake is still there, despite the ongoing paucity of rain. What better way to explore it than aboard [Miss Liberty](#), a 64-foot-long paddle-wheel boat that allows well-mannered dogs. We cruised the lake for 90 minutes while the captain recounted the lake's history and clued us in on the celebrities who have homes along the shoreline.

The lesson learned

Later, at the Big Bear Alpine Zoo (which is also a rehabilitation center that returns 80% of the animals rescued to the wild), I visited with three grizzlies; a three-legged black bear, a pack of white wolves and two snow leopards.

Miles one way from downtown L.A.

About 100

Resources

Big Bear lodging, www.bigbear.com; Best Western Big Bear Chateau, www.lat.ms/bigbearchateau; Grizzly's Bear Belly Deli & Cafe, www.bearbellydeli.com; Evergreen Restaurant, www.evergreenbigbear.com; Miss Liberty paddle-wheel boat www.pineknotmarina.com; Big Bear Alpine Zoo, www.bigbearzoo.org.

travel@latimes.com

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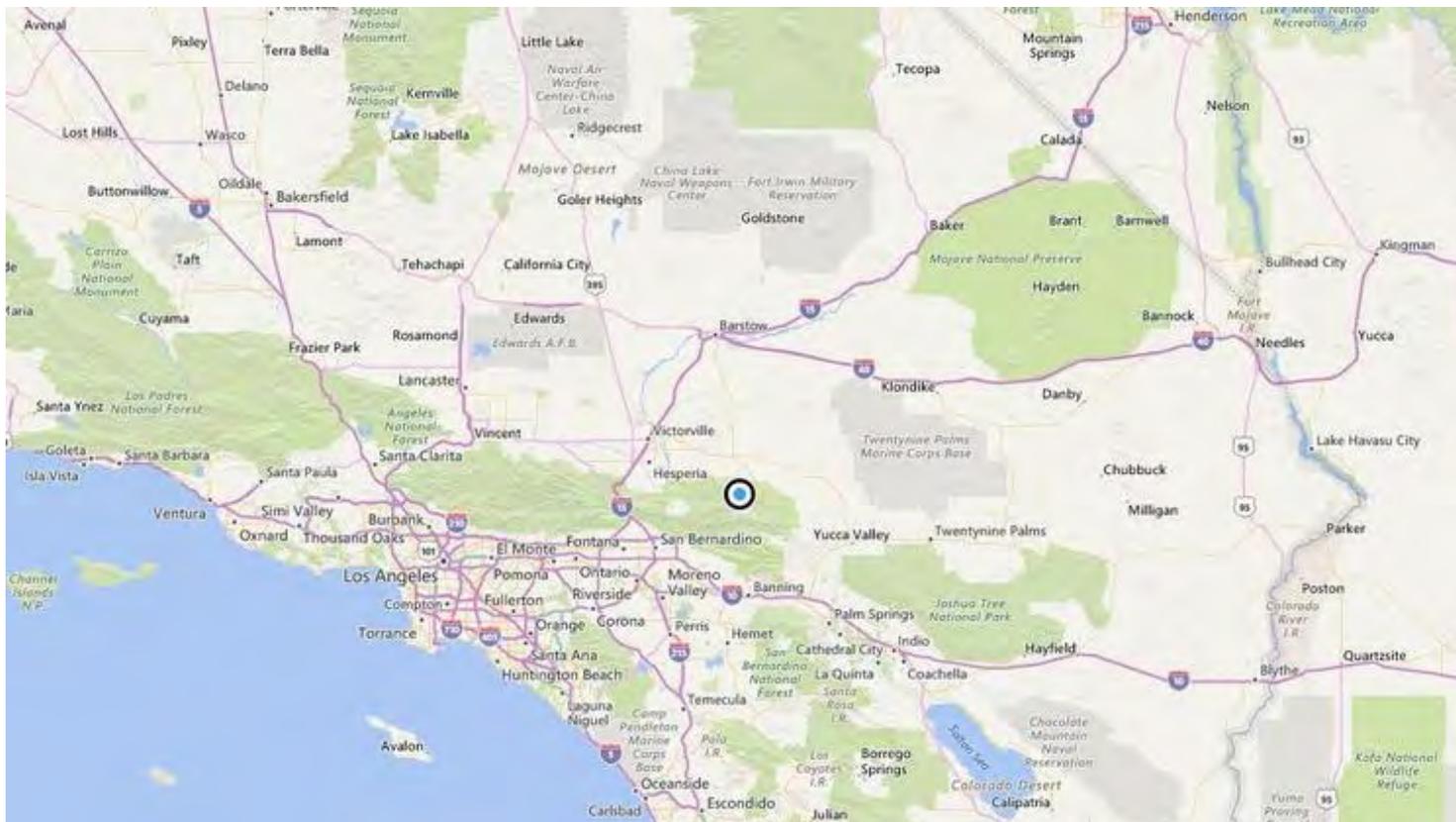
Updates

June 20, 2016, 7:45 a.m.: This article has been updated throughout.

This article was originally published August 15, 2015 at 8:00 a.m.

LOCAL / L.A. Now

Earthquake: 3.0 quake strikes near Big Bear Lake, Calif.



A map showing the location of the epicenter of Sunday evening's quake near Big Bear Lake, Calif.. (Bing Maps)

By **Quakebot**

JUNE 19, 2016, 9:30 PM

A shallow magnitude 3.0 earthquake was reported Sunday evening three miles from Big Bear Lake, Calif., according to the U.S. Geological Survey. The temblor occurred at 9:21 p.m. Pacific time at a depth of 0 miles.

According to the USGS, the epicenter was four miles from Big Bear City, Calif., 15 miles from Lake Arrowhead, Calif. and 19 miles from Apple Valley, Calif.

In the past 10 days, there have been 11 earthquakes of magnitude 3.0 or greater centered nearby.

This information comes from the USGS Earthquake Notification Service and this post was created by an algorithm written by the author.

Read more about [Southern California earthquakes](#).

By Desert Dispatch Editorial Board

Print Page

June 19, 2016 6:25PM

Our View: Heat warning deserves your attention

San Bernardino County's Health Officer Dr. Maxwell Ohikhuare has issued an excessive heat warning for the coming week, but if long-term forecasts prove correct High Desert residents may be in for an extended heat wave.

According to Accuweather, the Victor Valley will see 100-degree or higher temperatures eight of the next nine days and nine of the next 11. The highs Monday and Tuesday are expected to at or above 106 degrees in Victorville.

Barstow likely will have it even worse. That city will likely see highs of 111 on Monday and Tuesday, and 113 on June 28, according to Accuweather, which predicts Barstow will see 45 straight days of triple-digit temps.

On top of the heat, meteorologists warn that humidity levels will rise mid-week, giving the region more of a tropical feel than normal.

It's imperative that residents follow Ohikhuare's advice and take precautions. These tips are worth heeding:

- Stay in air-conditioned buildings or find an air-conditioned Cooling Center by calling the United Way's toll-free resource line at 2-1-1, or online at <http://211sb.org/cooling-centers>.
- Do not rely on a fan as your primary cooling device.
- Limit outdoor activity and avoid direct sunlight.
- Do not leave infants, children or pets in a parked vehicle. Even in the shade with windows cracked, temperatures can reach over 120 degrees inside and quickly kill a child or animal.
- Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- Take cool showers or baths to lower your body temperature.
- Check on at-risk friends, family and neighbors at least twice a day.
- Drink water more than usual and don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. Drink from two to four cups of water every hour while working.
- Avoid alcohol or liquids containing high amounts of sugar.
- Pets are vulnerable to high temperatures too. Some signs of heat distress in pets can include heavy panting, difficulty breathing, lethargy, excessive thirst, and vomiting. Leave your pets extra water.
- Bring pets inside during periods of extreme heat. Ensure they have plenty of shade if kept outside.
- Don't force animals to exercise when it is hot and humid. Exercise pets early in the morning or late in the evening. Do not let pets stand on sidewalks or hot asphalt to avoid burning their paws.

Southern California Edison also is asking Southern Californians to help prevent power outages by keeping their air conditioners' thermostats set at 78 degrees or higher, using fans instead of air conditioning when practical, closing blinds and drapes to keep out direct sunlight during hot periods, turning off lights when leaving a room and cutting back on electricity use between noon and 6 p.m. daily.

Edison also asks residents to limit the opening and reopening of refrigerators, which are major users of electricity in most homes, and to operate swimming pool equipment, dishwashers and dryers only during early morning or evening hours.

Edison stresses that this summer it is even more important than ever to conserve energy because of the limited availability of natural gas from the SoCalGas Co.'s Aliso Canyon storage facility. Gas from that facility is used to generate electricity throughout the region.

<http://www.desertdispatch.com/article/20160619/OPINION/160619906>

Print Page



RIVERSIDE COUNTY: Here's how supervisors plan to close \$60.9 million budget gap

By [JEFF HORSEMAN](#)

2016-06-17 15:17:39



Riverside County's budget plan calls for using reserve funds to close a \$60.9 million shortfall, but no layoffs or furloughs are planned, according to a report from the county executive office.

The Board of Supervisors will hear from department heads Monday, June 20, to review the proposed \$5.4 billion budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1. Supervisors are expected to give preliminary approval to the spending plan this month – the deadline is June 30 – before completing the budget later this year.

In recent budgets, the county has struggled as new expenses outpaced revenue growth. A major cost driver is raises guaranteed to public employee unions in exchange for pension concessions, which save an

estimated \$100 million annually.

A lawsuit settlement requiring the county to improve inmate health care in its jails is expected to add at least \$40 million a year to ongoing costs. In addition, the county has to hire staff for a \$300 million jail expansion being built in Indio, insurance costs are going up and the cost of internal services, such as information technology, is rising as well.

Supervisors also want to add more deputies to patrol unincorporated areas. But public safety costs consume roughly three-quarters of the county's discretionary income, and officials say there's nothing left to cut from non-public safety departments.

"Cutting general government services to achieve sufficient savings in aggregate would dramatically reduce services countywide, which we are attempting to avoid," County Executive Officer Jay Orr wrote in a memo to supervisors.

Riverside County has almost 20,000 full-time employees.

No layoffs or furloughs are called for in the new budget. Departments asked for \$131.3 million in new spending, but the executive office is funding only \$34.9 million of that.

To save on public safety, the board gave consulting firm KPMG up to \$18 million to implement the firm's 51 suggested cost-cutting measures and to find efficiencies in non-public safety departments.

But at least some recommendations, such as a different shift schedule for deputies, might require union consent or buy-in from District Attorney Mike Hestrin or Sheriff Stan Sniff

Both are elected officials with legal latitude to run their departments as they see fit.

Next fiscal year's budget represents a 1.7 percent overall increase in spending. While the total budget exceeds \$5 billion, the five supervisors have direct control over less than \$1 billion, the rest being mainly state and federal dollars ticketed for specific programs along with other special districts with their own funding sources.

The budget projects discretionary revenues will grow just 2 percent to \$752.8 million. Discretionary spending is \$813.7 million, leaving a \$60.9 million gap to be plugged by a mix of reserves and other funds.

Total reserves for budget stabilization and economic uncertainty are projected to be \$146.4 million at the end of the fiscal year, about \$41 million below a threshold set by board policy, which calls for reserves equal to 25 percent of discretionary revenue. In his memo to supervisors, Orr wrote the plan is to keep expenses steady and use future revenue growth to rebuild reserves.

The budget proposal assumes no new deputies for unincorporated communities, no cost-of-living raises for employees beyond current union contracts and no hiring for the Indio jail in the next fiscal year.

While next fiscal year's budget continues to pose challenges, a long-range forecast from the executive office suggests better times are ahead. The forecast predicts another shortfall in fiscal 2017-18 before revenues pull even with spending in fiscal 2018-19 and start to exceed expenses in fiscal 2019-20, assuming there's no recession.

Contact the writer: 951-368-9547 or jhorseman@pe.com

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San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

Riverside County putting the squeeze on contract cities

By Cassie MacDuff, The Press-Enterprise

and Cassie MacDuff, San Bernardino County Sun

Saturday, June 18, 2016

Calimesa is just the latest city to hit the wall with Riverside County's demands for more spending on public safety contracts.

The county fire agency is pushing Calimesa to add a third firefighter to each engine from the city's fire station.

The move would cost the city more than half a million dollars annually. The city's financial reserves would be depleted within two years, according to City Manager Bonnie Johnson.

San Jacinto and Canyon Lake are also grappling with how to pay for the rising costs of their contracts with Riverside County Fire/Cal Fire.

Canyon Lake has closed its sole fire station, serving 11,000 residents in the gated community, because it can't afford the county's prices.

And San Jacinto is exploring a joint fire department with the Idyllwild Fire Protection District because of the rising costs. (The plan was put on temporary hold last week because a new agency couldn't be up and running before the county contract expires; a one-year extension averts a gap in fire protection.)

Cal Fire/Riverside County Fire is not alone in presenting annual agreements the contract cities cannot afford.

Spiraling costs of contracts with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department have 12 of 17 contract cities looking into forming a joint powers authority — basically a parallel sheriff's department — for law enforcement.

It's a ludicrous proposal. The startup costs alone for a new agency to cover such a geographically spread-out area — from La Quinta to Temecula, Moreno Valley to Eastvale — will be sky high.

That it's being considered at all tells you just how desperate the cities are.

All of this turmoil makes me wonder whether the county is deliberately trying to get rid of its contract cities.

Cal Fire/County Fire Chief John Hawkins assured me he has gotten no directive from the Board of Supervisors or the county executive's office to squeeze out the contract cities. In fact, he considers them vital to the region's fire protection network.

Supervisor Kevin Jeffries said it would hurt the county, which is deficit-spending at more than \$1 million a week, to lose the contract cities.

Every city that breaks away causes a ripple effect, raising costs across the public-safety system, Jeffries said. "It's extremely unfortunate to watch this happen."

The county and all of the cities are grappling with rising public-safety costs, he said, and no one has been able to figure out how to fix it. He doesn't blame the cities that are exploring their options to reduce costs.

Hawkins vowed to work with Calimesa, Beaumont and the county to come up with a workable plan for the three jurisdictions to share the costs of beefing up the staffing on Calimesa's engines.

But three-person staffing seems non-negotiable. Hawkins considers it essential for the safety of his firefighters. And the Board of Supervisors adopted it as the standard in 2012, Hawkins said.

Calimesa leaders including Mayor Jeff Hewitt and Councilman Jim Hyatt have their own theories.

Hyatt thinks the push is driven by the long-running dispute between county fire and Canyon Lake, where the fire station was shuttered.

Hewitt thinks the push for three-person engines is driven by the firefighters union, which seeks more jobs for its members.

Hawkins said neither is the case, pointing to firefighter safety is the driving force. When staffing was increased to three-person engines in three contract cities, on-the-job injuries for firefighters declined 57 percent, he said.

Hyatt and Hewitt say two-person engines have worked just fine for Calimesa for decades. The overwhelming majority of calls are medical emergencies such as heart attacks and traffic accidents, which they don't believe require three firefighters.

The city has a structure fire only once every three years, Hewitt said. "We could get by with a volunteer fire department," he said.

The council members visited Blythe, a city of 20,000 that relies on volunteers, and came back impressed with how well it works.

I hope the county will pursue compromises to lower the costs for its contract cities. It won't be good for anybody to get this kind of divorce.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20160618/riverside-county-putting-the-squeeze-on-contract-cities>

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San Bernardino Valley College outgoing president to get paid \$186K

By Beau Yarbrough, The Sun

Friday, June 17, 2016



SAN BERNARDINO >> San Bernardino Valley College President Gloria Fisher won't be serving the rest of her contract — but she's getting paid like she is.

[Fisher announced her retirement in November](#) and will step down from her position on June 30. [She'll be replaced by Diana Rodriguez](#), the vice president of Student Services at Las Positas College in Livermore near San Francisco.

But the paychecks won't stop for another 12 months:

“Her employment contract was for a term through June 30, 2017,” San Bernardino Community College District Chancellor Bruce Baron wrote in an email. “In exchange for her voluntary resignation a full year before her contract expired (effective on June 30, 2016) and a waiver of claims against the district, the district agreed to pay her one year of salary (which is \$186,768).”

Fisher's not the only SBCCD president leaving at the end of this school year: Crafton Hills College president Cheryl Marshall [accepted a job](#) as the chancellor of the North Orange County Community College District in February. [She'll be replaced by Wei Zhou](#), the vice president of Instruction at Cuyamaca College in the suburbs of San Diego.

Marshall is not receiving any sort of severance or other payment from the community college district, according to Baron.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/social-affairs/20160617/san-bernardino-valley-college-outgoing-president-to-get-paid-186k>

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Upland family gets dog back after public protest at animal shelter

French bulldog has been adopted to Arizona family after going missing from his Upland home

By Imani Tate, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

Sunday, June 19, 2016



UPLAND >> His legs were too short for Birkin, a French bulldog, to jump for joy when he was returned to the arms of 2-year-old Sugar Qian and the toddler's mother, Jingyun Li, but his frisky friendliness with his family and about 75 protestors gathered outside the Upland Animal Shelter showed how glad he was to be home again.

Dog lovers and animal activists defied excessively high temperatures Sunday afternoon to come from cities all over Southern California to protest Birkin's allegedly illegal adoption. They cheered, clapped and shouted as Birkin was put into Li's outstretched arms. He immediately licked her laughing face while Li's husband, Kewen Qian patted his wife's back and their 3-month-old daughter Dora Qian slept

peacefully in her stroller.

"I'm just happy he's home again," said Harmony Smith, 11, of Twentynine Palms whose family came out to show support. "It was sad they didn't let her have her dog and she had to fight to get him back."

Birkin's return may have ended his family's frustration, but protest organizers say they're not done investigating procedures at the shelter cooperatively operated by the city of Upland's Animal Control Division and the nonprofit Friends of the Upland Animal Shelter.

"We're emphasizing the failure to follow proper procedure in allowing Birkin to be adopted even after his owners showed up with the proper paperwork showing he was theirs, he was seen and photographed at the shelter after his owner was told by shelter staffers he wasn't there and hadn't been seen," said Ashley Ruggles of Upland who organized Sunday's protest with Joyce Chang of West Covina and Jacqueline Wang of Hacienda Heights.

The three started a [Facebook group that generated responses from pet lovers](#) across California and stirred media coverage.

Li and Qian paid \$6,000 for the 2-year-old pure bred, champion French bulldog a year ago. They said they wanted the dog and Sugar to grow up together. Birkin mysteriously went missing on June 7, Li said, even though she said the doors were locked and she couldn't determine how he escaped. She and Qian put up posters in their Upland neighborhood, but didn't include the shelter in their search until June 12.

Li said shelter officials told her Birkin was not there when she inquired about him, but when she searched in the back, she found him, took his photograph and informed staff Birkin was her dog. She said she was told he was not hers anymore and he had been adopted by an Arizona family. When she protested the adoption and returned to the back just minutes later, Birkin was gone.

Protestors claimed shelter officials violated procedures governing animal adoptions from a shelter despite an [official statement shelter representatives posted on Facebook](#). The shelter statement said staff didn't have the

authority to require the new owner to return the dog.

“As an organization that works to save lost and abandoned animals, we consider animals to be members of our families,” the statement read. “Our first preference is always to reunite an animal with its owner if the owner can be located prior to adoption to a new family. Due to the unusual circumstances of this situation, we have made efforts and continue to make efforts to have the new owner relinquish the dog.”

Customer service representative Brenda Seager said the shelter had several conversations with the new owner and finally persuaded her late Saturday night to return Birkin. She drove in from Arizona early Sunday morning, signed ownership back to the shelter and in doing so gave the shelter the right to return Birkin to his family, Seager said.

Protestors weren't buying Seager's explanation, however.

“Did you see a helicopter land outside?” asked Carl Shulver of Riverside. “How did that dog get here so quickly? The adoption should never have been allowed. I've been involved with rescues for years and have never seen anything like this.”

Wang also said she was suspicious of what actually happened, especially after a shelter volunteer told her the adoption was faked and two shelter staffers took Birkin home.

“They're just not holding up to their responsibility,” said protester Ardythe Rodriguez of Riverside.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20160619/upland-family-gets-dog-back-after-public-protest-at-animal-shelter>

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LOCAL / L.A. Now

Dangerous fires, extreme heat across Southern California



Firefighters marched into El Capitan Canyon in Santa Barbara County on Friday, trying to corral the Sherpa fire before winds pick up. (Marcus Yam / Los Angeles Times)

By **Frank Shyong, Cindy Chang and Kate Mather**

JUNE 19, 2016, 8:15 PM

A massive heat wave descended on Southern California on Sunday, bringing record-breaking temperatures and fueling fires throughout the region, including one in Silver Lake that threatened homes and forced the closure of the 2 Freeway for several hours.

Temperatures hit triple-digits in several valley and inland area cities, including 106 degrees in Pasadena and Lancaster, sending residents to air-conditioned shops and movie theaters as fire officials kept a wary eye on the forecast, worried that dry, gusty winds would make already-ripe fire conditions more dangerous.

Forecasters expected the heat to peak Monday, with temperatures ranging from 100 to 110 degrees in most inland areas and potentially breaking records along the coast. Public officials braced for the impact, issuing a flex alert asking residents to conserve electricity and opening cooling centers across the region.

As fire crews continued to battle the so-called Sherpa fire that has burned roughly 7,893 acres in Santa Barbara County, firefighters in Los Angeles got their own scare in Silver Lake, where a fire spread into brush along the 2 Freeway, which was shutdown about 2 p.m. and reopened at 5:30 p.m.. Scores of firefighters – and some residents – quickly descended on the scene Sunday afternoon, trying to save nearby homes.

“I hope it’s not telling us what’s going to happen this summer,” said Leesa Martling, a 56-year-old landscape designer who watched people try to douse the Silver Lake fire with water buckets. “I hope this isn’t going to be the hottest summer ever.”

Meanwhile, a wildfire fueled by dry brush and sweltering temperatures has scorched 1,500 acres just north of the U.S.-Mexico border and prompted mandatory evacuations for the entire East County community of Potrero.

About 25 homes south of state Route 94 and east of state Route 188, near where the fire initially sparked about 11:30 a.m., were also evacuated.

Tuesday could mark the start of a cool-off, as a high-pressure system moves east and moisture-filled clouds blow in from Baja California, said Stuart Seto, a weather specialist with the [National Weather Service](#). Temperatures should drop by about 10 degrees, he said.

The hot, dry weather was a sharp contrast to the cooler, cloudier days Los Angeles has seen in recent weeks – nicknamed “June gloom” by locals.

“It changes so fast,” said Terry Choi, a Torrance resident avoiding Sunday’s heat at an ice cream parlor in Alhambra. “I was wearing cardigans last week.”

Downtown L.A. hit 96 degrees by mid-afternoon Sunday – far cooler than San Bernardino (111 degrees) or Ontario (110). Burbank peaked at 109 degrees, surpassing the previous record of 104 degrees set in 1973. Woodland Hills tied a record of 109 degrees set in 2008.

The National Weather Service also issued a red-flag warning, saying the soaring temperatures, low humidity and gusty “sundowner” winds could present an “extreme fire danger.”

That danger was highlighted in Silver Lake, where a fire quickly spread Sunday afternoon, threatening a neighborhood along the 2 Freeway. Smoke spread over the closed roadway as some residents tried to douse hot spots, shoveling dirt or spraying water from garden hoses.

Marnie Klein was sitting on her couch when she heard a rustling noise, like leaves. She looked up to see a telephone pole just beyond her Lake View Avenue backyard completely engulfed in flames. She grabbed a phone to call 911, wielding a garden hose in her other hand.

“Somebody help!” she screamed.

The fire started near the intersection of Lake View Avenue and Allesandro Way – the cause was under investigation – and pushed northwest by winds, Los Angeles fire officials said. Nearly 200 firefighters responded as a helicopter swooped over the freeway, dropping fire retardant.

Crews needed about 45 minutes to get the fire under control. Two homes on Corralitas Drive were damaged along with three sheds on nearby properties, said David Ortiz, a spokesman for the [Los Angeles Fire Department](#).

The dry weather and 100-degree heat set the stage for the fire, Ortiz said.

“The biggest factor was the high temperature,” he said. “The grass was 100% receptive to the fire.”

The flames stopped alarmingly close to Klein’s home. Part of her back fence lay in a charred pile. The cushions on her patio furniture were singed. Her house smelled of smoke, but it wasn’t damaged.

“I’m the most lucky person of the day,” Klein said. “There were guardian angels watching over me.”

Another fire broke out Sunday afternoon in San Diego County, tearing through 100 acres of rocky, steep terrain and prompting dozens of evacuations west of Potrero, located not far from the Mexican border.

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In Santa Barbara County, firefighters worked to better contain the Sherpa fire before the weather conditions worsened. That fire, which sparked Wednesday afternoon near Refugio Road, chewed through a combustible combination of chaparral, tall grass and brush in a wilderness area that hasn’t burned since 1955.

The fire also burned a small water treatment building at El Capitan state beach, fire officials said, and damaged avocado, lemon and olive crops. At one point, the fire forced the closure of the 101 Freeway.

As of Sunday afternoon, officials estimated the fire was 51% contained, but warned that the biggest challenge could still be ahead. A red-flag warning has been issued until 10 a.m. Tuesday.

“The greater danger of the fire is always at night here because of the sundowner winds,” said Costa Dillon, an information officer stationed at the command post.

Elsewhere in Southern California, families looked for ways to stay cool.

For Bryan Adams and Katia Kaplun, the year’s hottest day began with a stop at a splash park in City Terrace, where their young son could run through jets of water. After that came a stop at Fosselman’s Ice Cream, where outdoor seats were empty as customers crammed into the air-conditioned parlor.

Adams said his family’s house isn’t well-shaded and doesn’t have air-conditioning. They rely on wall-mounted units, outdoor fans and a kiddie pool to get through the summer, he said.

“We have to be creative about ways to stay cool,” Adams said.

Down the street, Valerie and Richard Gonzalez walked out of Target pushing a shopping cart loaded with two large tower fans. There’s no air-conditioning at their home in El Sereno, they said, so they planned to set up a pool, blast the fans and ice beers to stay cool.

“We’re just going to hang out and wait for the sun to go down,” Valerie Gonzalez said.

When they reached their car, she sent her husband back inside the store to buy a towel for their drive home. The steering wheel was too hot to touch.

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Times staff writers Alexia Fernandez contributed to this report.

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UPDATES:

8:15 p.m.: This story was updated with more information throughout.

This story was originally published at 11:25 a.m.

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This article is related to: [Fires](#), [Wildfires](#), [National Weather Service](#)

Opinion / Editorial

Editorial L.A. County parks need funding. But so does the fight to end homelessness



Men play pinocle in January at Fred Roberts Recreation Center in South Los Angeles, an area that is among the most park-poor parts of L.A. County. (Los Angeles Times)

By **The Times Editorial Board**

JUNE 20, 2016, 5:00 AM

When Los Angeles County supervisors asked voters to extend an expiring parcel tax for parks and open space two years ago, [they did almost everything wrong](#).

They gave [minimal notice to the public before putting the measure on the ballot](#). They had no countywide discussion on what to include or how much to charge. They did no comprehensive assessment of needs, so they had no plan to match the funding to the places with the fewest parks or the facilities in the most desperate state of disrepair. They planned to divide much of the money equally among themselves to spend in their five districts on their own priorities.

It was as if they were saying to voters, “Don’t worry about the details; we’ve worked this out among ourselves; we know what we’re doing. Just trust us and say yes to this tax.”

A majority of county voters did say yes, but the measure fell short of the needed two-thirds.

This time, the [county has done almost everything right](#).

It hired experts who examined the existing park and recreation resources and mapped out the unmet needs, noting vast areas of L.A. in which residents are more than a comfortable walk from the nearest public park, pool, gym or open space. Officials conducted numerous community meetings, hearing out residents and learning what they wanted. They crafted a plan that tries to balance the competing desires for more open space in the mountains and near beaches, more new facilities in currently park-poor areas, and restoration and maintenance of eroding trails, dilapidated beach restrooms and long-neglected buildings and equipment. Last month, they went back to residents with a series of public meetings to find out if they were missing anything.

The Board of Supervisors plotted out a good course and the county Regional and Park and Open Space District engaged in a process that was in many ways a model of public outreach and involvement. [Officials brought back what appears to be a good \(although very ambitious\) product](#) – one that would nearly double the assessment that property owners have been paying since 1992, but in the service of badly needed amenities that are crucial to the health, safety and quality of life of county residents.

“

The supervisors would have ... to offer a compelling argument for moving ahead with a parcel tax for parks if it would compete with [homelessness] funding.

The draft measure to be taken up by the Board of Supervisors — [either Tuesday as originally scheduled](#), or later this month — is better than Proposition P, the one that fell short in 2014.

But a lot has happened in two years. Two county supervisors were term-limited out, two new ones are in and the board, to its credit, has adopted [four top, interrelated priorities](#): reforming the Sheriff's Department, improving child protection, integrating health services – and dealing with homelessness.

Homelessness was a serious problem in 2014, and in fact has been a serious problem in Los Angeles County for decades. But it has reached a crisis level, and an unusual and welcome focus and resolve has emerged among elected officials to do something about it. County supervisors continue to explore a variety of funding ideas to help deal with the problem, and one of their back-up plans is a parcel tax.

Having made homelessness a top priority, the supervisors would have to be prepared to offer a compelling argument for moving ahead with a parcel tax for parks if it would compete with a funding plan for homelessness.

There will be smart-alecks who say the supervisors should just put the homeless in the parks, but it is no joke. It may come to that, absent a comprehensive and properly funded program for improving mental health and drug treatment, stopping the flow of newly homeless from hospitals, jails, shelters, condo conversions or persistent poverty — and of course stepping up construction of supportive housing and availability of services for homeless veterans.

As elected officials, county supervisors live in a political world ruled by polling and fundraising, so their focus is often on what is achievable — policy priorities notwithstanding. They might very well see a path forward that funds homeless services and still does the very necessary work they must do on parks, recreation and open space. But they made homelessness their priority. They were right to do so. Let's hope they remember that when they consider whether and when to go back to the voters with a parks tax.

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This article is related to: [Homelessness](#)

San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

Brown, Legislature are out of order on judge shortage

Governor and Legislature cancel each other out on adding judges or reassigning vacancies, leaving Inland counties wanting

By Cassie MacDuff, The Press-Enterprise

and Cassie MacDuff, San Bernardino County Sun

Sunday, June 19, 2016

My fondest wish right now is that the governor and the Democratic-led Legislature would get on the same page regarding California's desperate need for judgeships.

The state is short 250 judges to carry the current caseload, and the shortage is worst in San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

But the two branches of government have been ping-ponging back and forth since last year, killing each other's best ideas for addressing the problem.

The Legislature unanimously approved Sen. Richard Roth's bill last fall to add 12 seats on the bench in the neediest counties.

It was a modest proposal, but the governor vetoed it, saying he wanted to make do with existing judgeships and instead reassign vacancies from counties that have more than they need to counties that are critically short.

The governor's proposed 2016-17 budget included language to shift four vacancies – two each in Alameda and Santa Clara counties – to Riverside and San Bernardino counties, which are short 51 and 57 judges respectively.

But a legislative committee killed the provision last week.

A northern California legislator explained that he would rather add judgeships than “trying to steal from other counties.”

It's almost like legislators have forgotten that the governor vetoed a bill in November that sought to add judges.

It's a classic push-me/pull-you, and the Inland counties are getting crushed in the middle, said Marsha Slough, former San Bernardino County presiding judge, now an appellate court justice.

She wishes legislators from better-judged counties would see things in the proper, statewide perspective:

“There is not a county that comes close to San Bernardino or Riverside in the percentage of the shortage,” Slough said, both short more than 40 percent.

It's like trying to field a baseball team with six players when the opposing team has nine and several more on the bench, ready to rotate in, Slough said.

Three courthouses in San Bernardino County are shuttered because of the shortage of judges and funding.

It's so bad, the desert transit agency is launching a Friday-only bus route from Needles to the nearest courthouses, in Barstow and Victorville. Presiding Judge Raymond C. Haight III is rearranging the court

schedule so Needles cases can all be heard on Fridays.

It will be no picnic for people from Needles. They'll have to be at the El Garces Hotel at 6:15 a.m. to get to Barstow by 9:30 a.m., where they'll still have a quarter-mile walk to the court. Folks with cases in Victorville will arrive at 10:15 a.m.

Either way, it's an all day proposition. The bus home doesn't arrive back in Needles till 7:15 p.m.

It's a Band-Aid solution to a gaping wound, but at least it's something.

The last, best hope for addressing the judicial shortage in the coming fiscal year now seems to be a bill by Republican Assemblyman Jay Obernolte, of Big Bear Lake, that would do what the governor prefers: move five vacant judgeships to inland counties.

"If we can get this one on the governor's desk, I believe he'll sign it, because it does exactly what he asked us to do," Obernolte told me.

But if the Democratic governor and Democratic legislature haven't been able to agree on this tiny, baby step toward fixing this enormous problem, what hope does a Republican-authored bill have?

Neither Obernolte nor Roth believes it hinges on partisan politics. (After all, Roth's bill got unanimous support from Democrats and Republicans in both houses.)

"It's a geographical issue," Roth said: Northern California legislators don't want to lose positions in their counties.

Obernolte's bill has his full support, Roth said, but if it fails, "I'm fully intending to come back with a judicial funding bill at the start of the next session" on Dec. 5.

Riverside County Presiding Judge Harold W. Hopp said the issue is ripe for compromise: to reallocate some vacancies and create some new judgeships.

The judicial shortage is just one of many issues on Gov. Jerry Brown's plate right now. I know.

But I hope he'll meet with some of his Democratic legislators and explain that reallocating a few vacancies is the only viable solution in the short term.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/government-and-politics/20160619/brown-legislature-are-out-of-order-on-judge-shortage>

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LOCAL / L.A. Now

Group sues over decision to allow Islamic center near John Wayne Airport



A plane flies over the 405 Freeway as it approaches the runway at John Wayne Airport on October 20, 2015. (Glenn Koenig / Los Angeles Times)



By **Luke Money** · Contact Reporter

JUNE 18, 2016, 10:31 AM

An association representing business owners in Costa Mesa has filed a lawsuit seeking to overturn the City Council's decision to allow an Islamic group to open a gathering center in a business park next to John Wayne Airport.

The suit alleges the approval violates property rights by giving privileges to the center that aren't enjoyed by other tenants in the area.

The Koll-Irvine Community Assn., which encompasses the business park located south of the 405 Freeway next to the airport, is looking to overturn the council's vote that cleared the way for the Ismailis, a branch of Shia Islam, to open a 6,000-square-foot center.

“The evidence before the council did not support the decision,” states the lawsuit, filed in Orange County Superior Court.

City spokesman Tony Dodero said that Costa Mesa had received the lawsuit but that he could not comment on pending litigation.

The council’s 3-2 vote in March overturned an earlier Planning Commission decision to deny the Ismailis’ proposed jamatkhana — a gathering place used for religious, cultural and educational purposes. The commission had ruled in February that the facility would put further stress on the area’s parking.

In the lawsuit, the association says allowing the Ismailis to open shop will impact the property rights of its membership.

“The business park is a shared-use ownership; the association owns the common area, and all of the businesses have to share the parking area and the common area,” said attorney Michael Leifer, who is representing the association. “And what appears to be happening is that the city’s approval purports to give the religious center rights that are different and potentially superior to rights of other businesses in the park.”

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Essentially, Leifer said Friday, the city is “purporting to be the referee, umpire, arbitrator of a division of a shared property right that it doesn’t have the power to do.”

Some business owners in the park recently sent letters urging the Planning Commission to deny another project in the area — an educational nonprofit organization that offers musical theater and performing arts classes — saying it would further exacerbate parking issues.

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Money writes for Times Community News.

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LOCAL / CALIFORNIA

Across L.A. County, law enforcement looks for resources to deal with the mentally ill



Sheriff's Sgt. Annadennise Briz, left, and Deputy Gabriela Ververa walk a man into Exodus, a mental health urgent care center near L. A. County-USC Medical Center. (Francine Orr / Los Angeles Times)

By **Cindy Chang**

JUNE 20, 2016, 5:00 AM

A slender young woman with brown hair stood on a Commerce street in early March, ignoring a driver's pleas to move.

She reached down and bent his front license plate, asked him for money and then yanked his windshield wiper off.

She appeared agitated – from drugs, mental illness or both. As Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies prepared to use physical force to subdue her, a plainclothes deputy and a social worker, both specially trained in mental health intervention, arrived.

Instead of trying to wrestle the woman into submission, they called an ambulance to take her to a psychiatric ward.

Gabriela Ververa, the deputy on the mental health team, contrasted the differing responses.

“When I worked patrol, I was taking people to jail. Can you say you're really helping people?” she said. Now, she said, “for the most part, we hospitalize them and avoid the crisis.”

At a time when law enforcement is under intense public scrutiny for high-profile shootings of civilians, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department is one of many agencies nationwide looking to better equip officers to handle the mentally ill people they face on the streets every day.

In some places, the changes have been in the works for years but have been hampered by a lack of funding.

Within a patchwork mental health system that offers little in the way of long-term care, law enforcement is a crucial first line of defense. Police are often the first to arrive when a mentally ill person is acting disruptively, yet few have formal training in defusing such situations.

The mentally ill are especially at risk for violent encounters with law enforcement. In Los Angeles County in 2014, nearly 30% of the incidents where sheriff's deputies used physical force while on patrol involved someone with a mental illness.

Meanwhile, the need is growing: The number of 911 calls involving mentally ill people in sheriff's territory has surged by 55% since 2010. The LAPD saw a 30% increase over the same period. Sheriff's officials cite factors such as the shortage of treatment options and the prevalence of synthetic drugs like methamphetamine, which can mimic the effects of mental illness.

As part of an ambitious new plan, sheriff's officials are hoping to increase the number of mental health teams and to put many of the agency's 9,000 deputies through a week-long training to better deal with the mentally ill. The changes, they say, are long overdue but have gained renewed urgency with the recent spotlight on police use of force.

To move forward, the Sheriff's Department is seeking \$2.8 million in funding from the county Board of Supervisors. As line items in the annual budget, the requests are likely to be approved later this month, but more money will be required over the next several years to fully implement the new mental health initiative, officials said.

The stakes are high.

“When you receive as many calls as we do about people affected by mental illness, you have to train people to deal with them, or you have outcomes unfair to the mentally ill,” said Louis Dekmar, second vice president for the International Assn. of Chiefs of Police and the police chief in LaGrange, Ga. “The family who calls you for help ends up with a violent encounter with the police. We have a moral obligation to learn how to deal with these incidents.”

In 1993, the Sheriff's Department became the first law enforcement agency in the Los Angeles area to deploy Mental Evaluation Teams. The LAPD and the Long Beach Police Department soon followed suit.

The teams patrol Los Angeles County, talking people out of jumping off freeway overpasses and getting help for others who are brandishing knives or running naked through the streets.

Twenty-one local police agencies now have the teams, which have been praised by both law enforcement leaders and advocates for the mentally ill.

The officer-and-clinician duos "take a step back and provide someone the space they need to feel safe. They take a slower approach," said Mark Gale, criminal justice chair for the National Alliance on Mental Illness' Los Angeles County Council.

But there is a chronic shortage of teams.

Long Beach Police Chief Robert Luna said staffing reductions prevent him from expanding his mental health teams beyond the single one on duty each shift.

In sheriff's territory, there are only eight teams, with fewer on duty at a given time, for the more than 4,000 square miles patrolled by the Sheriff's Department. Often, deputies don't bother to call because it can take hours for a team to arrive.

Last year in Lakewood, a federal law enforcement officer tried to summon a team to help his mentally ill brother, but all were busy on other calls. Sheriff's deputies fatally shot the brother when he refused to get out of his car and drove it towards them.

In Long Beach, though, when a woman who had been brandishing a hunting knife locked herself in a McDonald's restroom, Long Beach Police Officer Chris Costa spent 10 minutes coaxing her to slide the knife under the door. The effort may have avoided a violent encounter with other officers, said Costa, who has worked as the law enforcement half of a mental health team for nearly two decades.

The LAPD's mental health teams are relatively well-staffed but still have only been able to respond to about a third of mental health calls, said Det. Charles Dempsey, who heads the department's mental evaluation unit.

With a recent expansion from eight to 17 teams on duty, Dempsey anticipates that up to 70% of mental health calls will now be answered by specialists.

In August 2015, an advisory board convened by Dist. Atty. Jackie Lacey produced a long list of recommendations to improve mental health care in the county, among them nearly tripling the number of sheriff's mental evaluation teams to 23. Sheriff's officials hope to reach that target by gradually obtaining more funding from the county, adding two additional teams this year and more in the future.

"Our struggle has been we don't have enough teams to handle the need, especially for the geography we serve,"

said Chief Stephen Johnson, who heads the new mental health initiative. “The ones we have don’t have the capacity to move around the county and really be a resource to deputies.”

The LAPD and the California Highway Patrol are among the estimated one-third of police agencies nationwide that have some form of mental health training for officers. Both recently upped the length of their courses to 40 hours.

Officer Edgar Figueroa, a spokesman for the CHP, said his agency’s move was prompted in part by a 2014 incident in which an officer was captured on a cellphone video repeatedly punching a woman who was walking on the 10 Freeway in Los Angeles.

In L.A. County, jail deputies recently began taking a 32-hour course on mental illness and de-escalation tactics. Many patrol deputies will eventually take a similar course if the funding is approved by the supervisors.

Some deputies have already gone through a one-day training that teaches them how to act less threatening: Don’t rest a hand on a gun; avoid sudden movements; build a rapport with mentally ill people. Using simulators, other deputies train in realistic scenarios involving people who are agitated and threatening violence.

As the training takes hold, sheriff’s officials expect that use of force by deputies against the mentally ill will decrease. Dekmar, the George police chief, said officers in his department who have received similar training have been involved in 50% fewer use-of-force incidents than before.

The decrease is “absolutely because of the training,” Dekmar said.

On a recent morning in Malibu, Ververa and mental health clinician Brittaney Dennis tried to coax a homeless man to abandon his camp on a hillside with a sweeping ocean view.

A sheriff’s deputy had summoned the team after negotiating with the man, who was suffering from delusions, off and on for several days. His elaborate campsite, which included a large patio umbrella and a grill, was a fire hazard and risked eroding the fragile landscape.

“Hi, my name’s Gabby,” Ververa said, using her first name to seem more approachable.

“I’m kind of busy right now,” said the man, tanned and bare-chested with a blond pompadour that made him a ringer for James Dean.

Before long, he loosened up, explaining that he was guarding Medusa, the snake-haired monster of Greek mythology, and gesturing at the bites she had supposedly inflicted on his hands.

Ververa and Dennis listened sympathetically, but when they suggested that he leave, he became agitated.

The team retreated. Despite his delusions, the man did not meet the criteria for being involuntarily committed to a mental hospital because he was able to take care of his basic needs and was not a danger to himself or others. He showed no inclination to leave on his own, and the hill was too steep for him to be forcibly removed.

A Times reporter was allowed to shadow the team on the condition that the names of the Malibu man and others not be used. They are considered patients under the care of the county Department of Mental Health, which is bound by confidentiality laws.

On another day, Ververa and Dennis arrived at an East Los Angeles McDonald's where a 39-year-old man with disheveled hair in a blue soccer jersey had been banging on car windows.

He said his name was Julius Caesar.

As Ververa guided him to the back seat of her unmarked car, she explained that he was not under arrest. He did not resist.

Once at Exodus, a mental health urgent care clinic near [Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center](#), he spouted racial slurs against African Americans who were present. A security guard put his sunglasses, coins, broken earphones, rags and other possessions in a paper bag.

"He's in their hands," Ververa said as she left the clinic.

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Alabama County Refuses to Lower Flags in Honor of Orlando Mass Shooting Victims

POSTED 1:32 PM, JUNE 17, 2016, BY CNN WIRE



Alabama county officials refused to lower flags to half-staff to honor the victims of the Orlando mass shooting this week even after President Barack Obama and Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley ordered flags to be lowered.

Citing the U.S. Flag Code, Baldwin County Commissioner Tucker Dorsey told CNN affiliate WPXI that while his "heart certainly goes out to the victims and their families," the incident "doesn't meet the test of the reason for the flag to be lowered."

Dorsey added that the code states that the flag is to be lowered on Memorial Day and to commemorate the deaths of government officials.

In a Facebook post published Tuesday, Dorsey wrote that Baldwin County also didn't lower the flags after the Paris terror attacks last November and the shooting in San Bernardino, California last December by a married couple who pledged allegiance to ISIS.

Obama ordered the flags to be flown at half-staff Sunday following the mass shooting at Pulse gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida, early Sunday that left 49 dead and 53 injured.

"I realize that the President and Governor may make the order, but I believe and interpret their order inconsistent with the adopted flag code," Dorsey told the NY Daily News.

The Orlando tragedy is the worst mass shooting in U.S. history.

This Week's Circulars



NATION/WORLD • POLITICS



Government workers fret what they can, can't say about Trump

1 photo



FILE - In this March 6, 2016 photo, Tomas Strouhal shows the Trump sticker that is on his car... [Read more](#)

WASHINGTON (AP) — Pop quiz: You work for the government, and you're passionate about the presidential campaign. Which are you allowed to do:

A: Wear your red hat with Donald Trump's slogan, "Make America Great Again!" to the office.

B: Forward an email at work urging colleagues to vote for Hillary Clinton.

C: Ask a friend to write a check to Bernie Sanders' campaign.

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Answer: None of the above.

The topsy-turvy presidential race has stirred strong feelings across the country, and Americans are not known for keeping quiet about their political views. But here's a warning for the nearly 3 million people who work for the federal government: Be careful what you say — and where.

A complex web of restrictions limits political activity by government workers, especially when they're on the clock. Not all the rules are self-evident, and they vary for different types of employees.

So this year, as the campaign heats up, agencies from the White House to the U.S. Postal Service are trying to educate workers about what they can and can't do without violating a relatively obscure law known as the Hatch Act. The Office of Special Counsel, an independent federal law enforcement agency, says requests for training at all levels of government are surging.

"It's not just questions about Donald Trump," said Ana Galindo-Marrone, chief of the office's Hatch Act Unit. "I've had people want to know what they can do with respect to Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders. And the answer is the same for all of them."

Among the questions that federal employees have posed this year: Can I put "Make America Great Again" in my work email signature? Can I wear my "Make Donald Drumpf Again" hat, popularized by comedian John Oliver, at the office? What about retweeting the presumptive GOP nominee's flashy tweets from my iPhone when the work day gets slow?

No, no, and no.

Under the Hatch Act, government employees can't engage in political activity while they're on duty or in their office or work vehicle, with few exceptions. In their private time, they're free to advocate for candidates, donate money, even speak at a rally or fundraiser, as long as they don't mention their official titles. They can't solicit or collect donations from others, even on their own time.

The rules cover all workers who fall under the executive branch, but not to members of the military or people who work for Congress or the courts.

Tomas Strouhal, a postal worker from Quarryville, Pennsylvania, wasn't well-versed in the rules when he put a Trump bumper sticker on the car he parks at work before switching to a mail truck for his route.

It turned out, neither was his supervisor. After another worker complained, Strouhal, 23, was called in and told to remove the sticker or risk being fired, he said. He took it down, but then discovered that he's actually allowed to have one political bumper sticker on his personal vehicle, even if he parks it at work.

"I definitely didn't know a bumper sticker could be such a big deal," Strouhal said. "My first thought was that they violated my First Amendment rights. It's almost like they were discriminating in a way, too, because a lot of people don't like Trump."

The limitations get even more confusing at the higher levels of government. Most workers fall under the "less restricted" category, but some, including those who work for the FBI, the CIA and parts of the Justice Department, are "further restricted," which comes with rules of its own.

Two government workers get a free pass: the president and the vice president, who have inherently political roles and can engage openly in political activity. At the White House, a handful of aides are permitted to work on the logistics like scheduling and travel arrangements to facilitate the president's campaign appearances and other political activity.

Yet the rules can be tricky for prominent officials like Cabinet secretaries, who are sometimes called upon to

campaign for their party's candidates and are often asked about politics when they appear in public.

"An individual or Cabinet secretary needs to make very, very clear with the campaign or the committee that if they engage, they are engaging in their personal capacity, that their official function or title isn't going to be something that is used," said David Simas, the White House political director. "That's the key distinction."

Former Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius was found to have violated the Hatch Act in 2012 when she made an off-hand remark at a gay rights group's gala about who should be North Carolina's next governor. And Secretary of State John Kerry, answering questions at Oxford University, had to demur last month when a student quizzed him on Trump.

"I'm not allowed under our law to get into, actually full-throatedly, into the middle of the campaign," Kerry said before moving on to another topic.

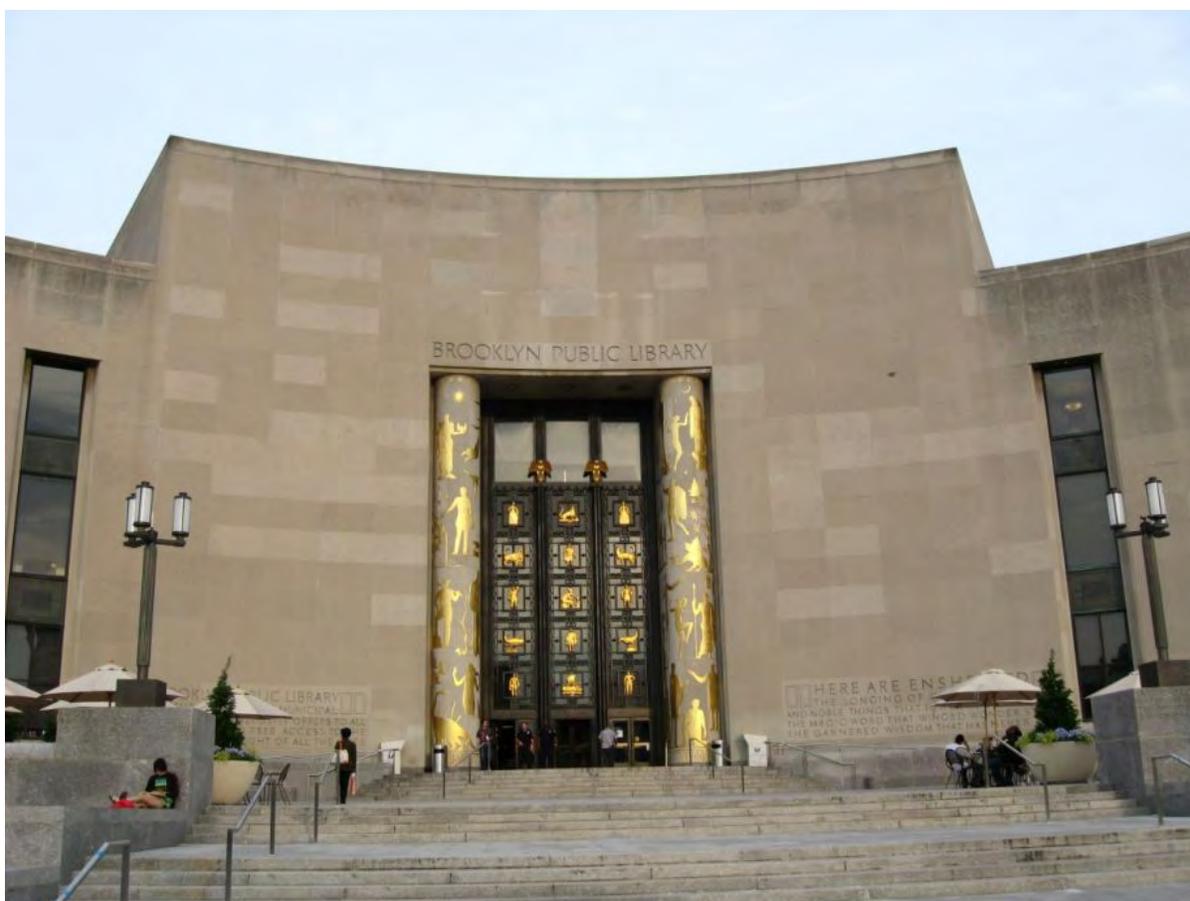
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Equity Factor 

Modern Public Libraries Can Help Bridge the Digital Divide

BY LINDA E. JOHNSON | OP-ED | MAY 27, 2016



The Brooklyn Central Library

A little over a year ago, Brooklyn Public Library patron Kim Best received the shock of her life. She was, for all intents and purposes, an illegal immigrant — terrifying news for the mother of a nine-year-old son.

She had lived in New York City since her family immigrated here in 1981, when Kim was only six years old. In the United States, foreign-born children of immigrants are eligible for derivative citizenship through a parent until the age of 18. But Kim's mother waited until 1996 to complete her own

naturalization, when Kim was an adult and no longer covered under the law. So while Kim had always thought herself a citizen, she was not.

Not knowing where to turn, Kim came to the library. There, she discovered free classes, study guides and legal advice that help hundreds of immigrants pursue U.S. citizenship every year. With the support of her son, who quizzed her nightly on American history, and after participating in an 11-week workshop at Central Library, Kim became a naturalized citizen on Oct. 14, 2015. It was one of the best days of her life.

Only a generation ago, the advent of the digital age seemed to bode ill for libraries. Who would need them, these bricks-and-mortar artifacts of a simpler time, with so much information accessible at the click of a button?

Yet the digital revolution has proved not to be the demise of libraries, but their rebirth — and today, they are more relevant than ever to the people and communities they serve. Many patrons come to us as generations before them did, in search of good books and helpful research materials. Others, like Kim, pass through our doors determined to change the course of their lives. Taken together, their stories signal a bright future for our society's most democratic institution.

Libraries are serving more people in more ways than ever before. At Brooklyn Public Library, our 60 branches logged nearly nine million visits last year, and 928,000 people attended our 47,000 public programs and events — all of which were, like everything libraries do, presented free of charge.

In New York City, the digital divide persists. With one-third of city households lacking internet access, families turn to libraries, the largest providers of free WiFi, to get and stay connected. Library computers are equipped with software and databases that freelancers, job seekers and students would not otherwise be able to afford. And free technology classes, job search and résumé assistance, and drop-in computer labs help New Yorkers find their way in a complex, knowledge-based economy.

As anyone who has visited a neighborhood branch recently will attest, the experience of being in a library is not what it once was. The era of shushing is long gone. Today, libraries are home to programs for patrons of all ages and backgrounds, alive with the energy of people from so many walks of life coming together under one roof.

Meanwhile the printed page, for centuries the foundation of library service, is alive and well. As of this writing, our catalogue holds 3.9 million items, the majority in print. In fact, thanks to increased investment from the city and help from private donors, we've increased our collections budget to its highest level since the recession.

As for Kim Best, her first year of American citizenship has been dizzying. On April 19, she proudly voted in a presidential election for the first time. Now Kim and her family are planning to travel internationally — perhaps to Guyana, where she has not been since she was a little girl.

But first, she will visit the White House on June 1 to help Brooklyn Public Library accept the 2016 National Medal for Museum and Library Service, the nation's highest honor for libraries. It will be Kim's first visit to the nation's capital, and she will gather beneath those stately marble columns with library

supporters and patrons — her fellow citizens — from all over the country.

And then, another door will open to her.

The Equity Factor is made possible with the support of the Surdna Foundation.

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Linda E. Johnson is the president and CEO of Brooklyn Public Library.

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